DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 216 000 SP 020 163

AUTHOR Brophy, Helen; And Others
TITLE Criteria for Evaluating the School Health Services Program.
INSTITUTION California State Dept. of Education, Sacramento.
PUB DATE 82
NOTE 17p.
AVAILABLE FROM Publications Sales, California State Department of Education, P. O. Box 271, Sacramento, CA 95802 ($1.50).

EDRS PRICE MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS Administrator Responsibility; *Administrators; Educational Environment; Elementary Secondary Education; *Evaluation Criteria; *Program Evaluation; School Districts; *School Health Services; *School Nurses; School Policy
IDENTIFIERS *California

ABSTRACT

This publication offers a checklist for identifying strengths and weaknesses of school health programs. The instrument can be used by school personnel, community members, or by an outside team of experts. Criteria are expressed in terms of desirable practices, with provisions for judging, on a five-point scale, the extent to which program characteristics meet each criterion. These criteria are organized into two areas, administration and the school nurses' role in the program. Considered under administration are district policies, written goals and objectives, personnel, facilities, responsibilities of principals, staff development activities, and student and family responses to the program. Criteria included for evaluating the school nurses' role are duties of health service personnel in and out of the school, procedures for evaluating and reviewing student health, providing health counseling to students, teachers, and parents, maintaining a safe school environment, and provisions for annual program evaluation. (FG)

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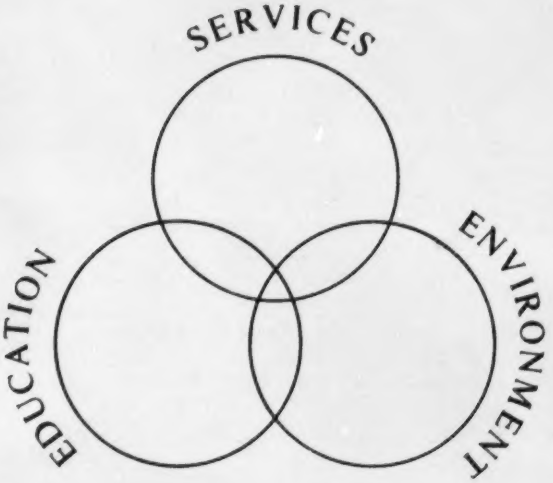
Criteria for Evaluating the School Health Services Program



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CALIFORNIA STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Wilson Riles, Superintendent of Public Instruction
Sacramento, 1982

SP 020 163

Acknowledgments

Sincere appreciation and grateful acknowledgments are extended to the persons who contributed their time and talents in the preparation of this publication.

The person who was responsible for preparing the manuscript was Helen Brophy, Consultant, School Nursing and Health Services, California State Department of Education.

The individuals who assisted in the development of the document were:

Freda Arnold, Supervisor of Nursing Services, Garden Grove Unified School District
Eileen Futas, Twain School Programs for Handicapped, San Diego City Unified School District
Josephine Lewis, School Nurse Practitioner, Alhambra Unified School District
Mary Jane Quick, Director of Health Services, Hayward Unified School District
Ruth Thomas, Director of Health Education, Office of the Tulare County Superintendent of Schools
Margaret Williamson, Head of Nurses, Placentia Unified School District

The individuals who assisted with evaluation and input during the preparation of the document were:

Patricia Ackerman, School Nurse, Auburn Union Elementary School District
Steve Baum, Science Department Chairperson, Fillmore Unified School District
Patricia Contini, District Health Coordinator, Fillmore Unified School District
Joseph Kinder, Principal, Imperial Unified School District
Donald McIntosh, Principal, Redlands Unified School District
Wallace McIntosh, Project Director, Imperial Unified School District
Gordon Milldrum, Fall River Joint Unified School District
Edna Morgan, Supervisor, Health Services, Sacramento City Unified School District
Peggy Nadin, Health Consultant, Office of the Nevada County Superintendent of Schools
Clark O'Dell, Associate Superintendent of Educational Services, Office of the Siskiyou County Superintendent of Schools
Jean Padelford, School Health Consultant, Office of the Ventura County Superintendent of Schools
Dolores Solberg, Health Consultant, Office of the Monterey County Superintendent of Schools
James Tarwater, Principal, Fall River Joint Unified School District
Florence Weed, Director of Health Services, Office of the Siskiyou County Superintendent of Schools
Charles Weis, Consultant for Categorical Programs, Fillmore Unified School District
John Wilbur, Superintendent, Fillmore Unified School District

This publication, which was edited and prepared for photo-offset production by the Bureau of Publications, California State Department of Education, was published by the Department, 721 Capitol Mall, Sacramento, CA 95814.

Printed by the Office of State Printing and distributed under the provisions of the Library Distribution Act

1982

Preface

Since the turn of the century, school health services programs have been an essential part of a balanced education and have helped to improve the lives and learning of our schoolchildren. California school districts have provided leadership in health services programs for many years.

Over the years, changes have occurred in school health services programs as a result of the emergence of needs unmet by other agencies. As the programs have been refined, the need for an evaluation instrument has become apparent. This document is offered to assist school district administrators and school nurses in evaluating their programs in terms of established and accepted criteria. The instrument sets forth ideal conditions, and the expectation is that the absolute ideal would be difficult, if not impossible, to achieve. However, by using the evaluation criteria presented in this document, school districts may more clearly identify areas in which improvement is desirable and achievable.

It is our hope that this document will prove to be a useful tool as school districts seek to assess the quality of their school health services programs.

DAVIS W. CAMPBELL
Deputy Superintendent
for Programs

J. WILLIAM MAY
Assistant Superintendent
and Director, Office of Curriculum
Services

EM B. RIGGS
Program Administrator
Health Programs

Introduction

A school health services program strengthens the educational process by improving the health status and health knowledge of children and youths.

Criteria for Evaluating the School Health Services Program is designed to be used by school personnel in a self-evaluation process. The purpose of the evaluation is to identify strengths and weaknesses of the program. On the basis of the findings and recommendations, plans can be developed to improve and enhance health services for students and families.

This evaluation instrument may be used by any of the following:

- An individual
- An interdisciplinary school group
- A broadly representative district group
- A school or district/community group
- An outside team of experts

The criteria are expressed in terms of desirable practices. Provision is made for judging, on a five-point scale, the extent to which a program meets each criterion (completely; to some degree—75 percent, 50 percent, 25 percent; or not at all). Space is provided for listing changes that may be needed. At the top of each major section, space is provided for recording recommended steps to be taken in relation to the changes needed. Care should be taken to make recommendations that will not have an adverse effect on provisions or practices already meeting the criteria. Changes that are needed will undoubtedly have to be evaluated in terms of short- and long-range goals, and recommendations will need to be developed accordingly. Obviously, provision should be made for follow-up of the recommendations.

Some suggested procedures for using the evaluation criteria to improve a school health services program are the following:

1. Determine the membership of the group to conduct the evaluation.
2. Determine the need for consultant help.
3. Review the criteria for making the evaluation.
4. Conduct the evaluation.
5. Determine the degree to which the program meets each criterion.
6. Note the changes needed.
7. Develop recommended steps for making needed changes, and record these changes in the appropriate spaces on the form.
8. Set up a priority order for accomplishing the changes.
9. Submit a report, including recommendations, to the administration.

The school health program is composed of three interrelated and interdependent components—health education, health services, and a healthful environment. In this publication the authors address only health services *in depth*.

Evaluation Criteria

Criteria	Completely	To some degree — Percent: 75	50	25	Not at all	Changes needed
I. Administration						
A. The policies of the district's governing board provide a school health services program designed to help all pupils achieve the degree of health their potentialities permit.	Recommended steps for making needed changes:					
1. The policies provide for a comprehensive and well-planned program of health services that reflect current legal requirements.						
2. The policies provide for the maintenance of a healthful school environment.						
B. Written goals and objectives for the district's school health services program are available.	Recommended steps for making needed changes:					
1. The goals and objectives determine the direction of the health services program.						
2. The goals and objectives determine the program for providing and maintaining a healthful school environment.						
C. The district has assigned qualified personnel to provide leadership for implementing and maintaining a comprehensive health services program and has provided the necessary resources.	Recommended steps for making needed changes:					
1. A qualified person with professional preparation in health services and administration has been delegated responsibility at the district level for providing leadership to the district's health services program.						
2. Job descriptions define the duties of each person who has responsibility in the health services program.						

Criteria	Completely	To some degree: Percent 75	50	25	Not at all	Changes needed
3. All personnel responsible for providing direct health services receive a formal evaluation according to district policy.						
4. The district provides the resources (funding, personnel, and materials) necessary to operate the health services program.						
5. The district utilizes special funding resources for health services.						
D. The principal of each school is responsible for implementing the school health services program.	Recommended steps for making needed changes:					
1. A school health advisory committee provides input to the health services program.						
2. Each member of the staff is informed regarding the district's health services program.						
E. Qualified health services personnel are adequate in number to implement the school health services program.	Recommended steps for making needed changes:					
1. Credentialed school nurses are employed in accordance with a district-established nurse-pupil ratio.						
2. The nurse-pupil ratio is determined by student health needs, legal requirements, number of individuals with exceptional needs, availability of clerical assistance, mobility of population, and geographic area.						
3. Physicians, dentists, and other medical specialists are available for consultation.						
F. Adequate facilities, equipment, and supplies are provided for the health services program.	Recommended steps for making needed changes:					
1. Appropriate health office facilities that allow for implementation of the program are provided.						
2. Essential equipment is provided and properly maintained.						

Criteria	Completely	To some degree (Percent) 75	50	25	Not at all	Changes needed
3. Essential health supplies are available in the school.						
G. The staff development program for school personnel provides information on health issues and practices.	Recommended steps for making needed changes:					
1. Staff development training opportunities in health receive emphasis comparable to that given to staff development opportunities in other subject areas.						
2. School nurses are involved in the planning of staff development programs.						
H. A health services guide is provided by the school district or by the office of the county superintendent of schools.	Recommended steps for making needed changes:					
1. A health services guide provided by the school district or the office of the county superintendent of schools is available in the school.						
2. The guide contains the objectives, procedures, and sample forms used in providing health services.						
I. Student and family responses to school health and nursing services are assessed.	Recommended steps for making needed changes:					
1. The attitudes of students and parents and their degree of satisfaction toward school health services are evaluated.						
2. Students utilize school nursing and health services when appropriate and in constructive ways.						
3. Most parents respond positively to referrals made by school nurses.						

Criteria	Completely	To some degree: Percent 75	50	25	Not at all	Changes needed
II. Program—The Nurse's Role						
A. The health and developmental status of students is assessed and evaluated.	Recommended steps for making needed changes:					
1. A general health and developmental history is obtained on kindergarten students and new enrollees.						
2. First-grade students comply with the Child Health and Disability Prevention Program requirement (Health and Safety Code Section 308.5).						
3. Teacher-school nurse conferences are conducted at least annually.						
4. A vision screening program is conducted for students in kindergarten and grades three and six (Education Code Section 49455), grades nine or ten (Motor Vehicle Code Section 12805), and for new enrollees and referrals.						
5. Color vision screening is conducted on boys in kindergarten or first grade (Education Code Section 49455).						
6. A hearing screening program is conducted for students in kindergarten and grades one, two, five, eight, and ten or eleven (Education Code Section 49455 and California Administrative Code, Title 17, Public Health, Section 2951), and for new enrollees and referrals.						
7. Scoliosis screening is conducted for seventh-grade girls and eighth-grade boys (Education Code Section 49452.5).						
B. Health services personnel inform and advise parents and appropriate school personnel of the results of health assessments.	Recommended steps for making needed changes:					
1. Results of health assessments are reported to parents and pertinent school personnel.						
2. Students with suspected health problems are referred to an appropriate source of health care, and follow-up continues until the student receives care (Education Code Section 49456).						

Criteria	Completely	To some degree: Percent 75	50	25	Not at all	Changes needed
C. The school nurse recommends necessary school adjustments for students with health problems.	Recommended steps for making needed changes:					
1. The regular school program is modified to accommodate the students' individual needs; i.e., preferential seating, shortened school day, and special bus passes.						
2. Students are referred by the school nurse for special education evaluation as needed.						
3. Arrangements are made for home/hospital instruction as indicated.						
D. The school nurse periodically reviews the health status and health maintenance plans of students with health problems.	Recommended steps for making needed changes:					
1. The school nurse reassesses the health status of students at least annually by:						
a. Consulting with the classroom teacher regarding the students' progress						
b. Conferring with the parents or guardians regarding the students' health						
c. Consulting with the students' source(s) of health care						
2. The school nurse updates the students' health maintenance plans as needed.						
E. The school nurse provides individual or group health counseling to students, parents, and teachers to effect behavioral change.	Recommended steps for making needed changes:					
1. The school nurse counsels students, school personnel, and families regarding health problems.						
2. Case conferences are held to assist pupils with special health problems to make the best possible personal and social adjustments.						

Criteria	Completely	To some degree: Percent 75	50	25	Not at all	Changes needed
F. The school nurse assists in the appropriate special education placement of individuals with exceptional needs and provides designated health-nursing services.	Recommended steps for making needed changes:					
1. "Informed Consents for Assessment" are obtained, and "Parent Rights" are explained.						
2. When students are being considered for special education placement, the school nurse conducts a special health assessment which includes a developmental and health history, home environment assessment, neurological assessment, and a review of all pertinent medical information.						
3. The school nurse prepares a report for the individualized education program (IEP) team.						
4. The school nurse serves on the IEP team.						
5. The school nurse participates in the review and update of the IEP at least annually.						
6. The school nurse is responsible for writing and implementing the IEP goals for "standardized procedures" (Business and Professions Code Section 2725(d)) for the administration of "specialized physical health care services" (Education Code Section 49423.5 and California Administrative Code, Title 5, Education, sections 3112(s), 3217, 3438, 3584, 3773, and 3797).						
G. The health services program includes prevention and control of communicable disease.	Recommended steps for making needed changes:					
1. All students comply with state legal requirements regarding immunizations (Health and Safety Code sections 3380—3385 and 3400—3407), plus the new code sections in California Administrative Code, Title 17, Public Health Subchapter 8, 6000 series.						
2. The school nurse interprets and implements policies and procedures concerning communicable diseases.						

Criteria	Completely	To some degree: Percent 75	50	25	Not at all	Changes needed
3. The school nurse administers immunizations (Education Code Section 49403(b)) in accordance with "standardized procedures" (Business and Professions Code Section 2725(d)).						
H. Health services personnel establish and maintain standards to minimize the effects of accidents and illness in school.	Recommended steps for making needed changes:					
1. Written policies and procedures for first aid and emergency care are provided to all school personnel.						
2. First aid is administered promptly to injured or ill pupils by the first person on the scene.						
3. The school nurse is available for consultation in cases of accident or illness.						
4. Phone numbers of parents and physicians are on file for each pupil to facilitate notification in cases of injury or illness.						
5. The school nurse provides periodic staff development on up-to-date first-aid procedures for all school personnel.						
6. Fully equipped first-aid kits are available in strategic locations on each campus and for field trips (Education Code Section 32040).						
7. First-aid equipment, such as stretchers and splints, is readily accessible.						
8. Accidents are analyzed to determine causes, and safety hazards are reported to the appropriate administrator for remedial action.						
I. The school nurse practitioner (SNP) provides primary health care to selected individuals.	Recommended steps for making needed changes:					
1. Criteria and priorities are developed for selection of individuals to be examined.						
2. The SNP identifies and manages specific conditions in accordance with "standardized procedures" (Business and Professions Code Section 2725(d)).						

Criteria	Completely	To some degree: Percent 75	50	25	Not at all	Changes needed
3. The SNP reports findings and develops a health care or case management plan.						
J. The school nurse assists in promoting the optimum health of the school staff.	Recommended steps for making needed changes:					
1. The school nurse provides leadership in the development, periodic revision, and enforcement of school district policies regarding staff health and safety.						
2. The school nurse orients school personnel regarding district staff health and safety policies.						
3. The school nurse counsels individual staff members regarding health problems and provides first aid as needed.						
4. The school nurse provides staff development programs and distributes current information concerning pertinent health issues.						
K. School health personnel assist in the provision of a safe and healthful school environment.	Recommended steps for making needed changes:					
1. School health personnel participate in the development and periodic revision of district policies regarding environmental health and safety.						
2. School health personnel assist administrators in achieving compliance with legal requirements.						
L. School nurses participate in the planning and implementation of a comprehensive health education program.	Recommended steps for making needed changes:					
1. The school nurse serves on curriculum development committees.						
2. The school nurse stimulates the incorporation of health instruction in the school curriculum and in each classroom.						

Criteria	Completely	To some degree: Percent 75	50	25	Not at all	Changes needed
3. The school nurse searches out, evaluates, and recommends new materials and community resources.						
4. The school nurse serves as a resource to teachers and presents individual lessons in the classroom.						
M. The school nurse serves as the school liaison to community agencies and medical and dental care providers.	Recommended steps for making needed changes:					
1. The school nurse maintains current information regarding community resources and referral procedures.						
2. The school nurse serves on community committees or boards and promotes cooperation, communication, and understanding among community resources and the schools.						
N. The school nurse participates as a team member in the development, implementation, and periodic evaluation of policies and procedures related to critical health issues, including substance abuse, adolescent pregnancy, venereal disease, child abuse, and the like.	Recommended steps for making needed changes:					
1. The school nurse assists in the identification and documentation of the scope of the problems.						
2. The school nurse participates in the development, review, evaluation, and revision of policies and procedures that apply to critical health issues.						
3. The school nurse serves as a team member to implement the policies and procedures.						
O. School health personnel provide assistance to families by referral for social services when needed.	Recommended steps for making needed changes:					
1. School health personnel facilitate family contact with local community resources.						
2. School health personnel assist families to obtain free or part-pay health services.						

Criteria	Completely	To some degree			Not at all	Changes needed
		Percent				
		75	50	25		
P. The student health record is a mandatory component of the student's cumulative school record.	Recommended steps for making needed changes:					
1. A health record is initiated for each student upon enrollment (California Administrative Code, Title 5, Education, Section 432).						
2. Individual student health records are transferred, retained, or destroyed as required by law and regulations (California Administrative Code, Title 5, Education, sections 437 and 438).						
3. The "California School Immunization Record" is completed for each student and is a "mandatory permanent pupil record" (Health and Safety Code Section 3389(a) and California Administrative Code, Title 5, Education, sections 430—432).						
4. Required and pertinent health information is recorded on the individual student health record.						
5. Confidentiality of and rights of access to individual student health records are observed as required by law and regulations (Education Code sections 49060—49078 and California Administrative Code, Title 5, Education, Section 434).						
Q. The school health services program is evaluated at least annually in terms of established objectives.	Recommended steps for making needed changes:					
1. There is an established procedure for compiling and analyzing health services data.						
2. The health services program is evaluated to determine:						
a. Compliance with legal requirements						
b. Program effectiveness						
c. Program needs						
d. Staffing patterns						
3. A report on the school health program is submitted annually to the appropriate district administrators and the school governing board.						

Work Sheet

Summary of recommended steps to be taken:	Priorities, time lines, and resources:

Selected References

Cook, D. L. *Program Evaluation and Review Technique: Applications in Education.* Lanham, Md.: University Press of America, 1978.

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Program Evaluation in the Health Fields. Volume II. Edited by H. C. Schulberg and F. Baker. New York: Human Sciences Press, Inc., 1979.

Program Evaluator's Guide (First edition). Sacramento: California State Department of Education, 1977.

Health Education Publications Available from the California State Department of Education

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